

Old Town San Diego State Historic Park
Interpretive Programming –Strategic Planning (DRAFT)

Mission Statement

The mission of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park is to present the opportunity to experience the history of early San Diego by providing a connection to the past.

Programs

- Strategic Plan for Interpretation – a comprehensive approach for implementation of park programs, including interpretive, operational, educational, and facilities.
- Ongoing Living History programs – currently limited to Wednesdays and some Saturdays
- Coordination with San Diego City Unified School District “Off-Campus Integrated Learning Experience” for the 4th grade “Old Town Cultural and Historical Program”.
- Educational Tours – provided by park volunteers, expanded opportunities to schools and special groups in partnership with Boosters of Old Town (BOOT) cooperating association.
- Blacksmith Shop: Increased number of smiths, including a 10 year old “apprentice.”
- Woodshop: With funds from BOOT and new volunteers, the woodshop has reopened. Donation of antique tools. Future plans include the production of props, tools, and period correct objects for use in the park. Also looking into maintenance and restoration work on wagons in the park. Sale of product is also contemplated. Hope to attract wheelwright to participate on regular basis.
- Adobe Manufacture: An enormous success. The manufacture of adobe bricks is turning out a product superior to the commercially obtained adobes the park has previously purchased. These have been used in the rehabilitation of the Cosmopolitan. There is discussion as to production for sale.
- Signage: As part of the Sign Master Plan that is being developed for the park a new park logo has been developed and is being used. New monument signs are in place, museum identification signs, new regulatory signs, wayfinding signage, building information signs, and parking lot banners have been installed. Updated event/seasonal banners needed.
- Interpretive Programs
 - Story Telling
 - Gambling
 - Foodways at the Commercial Restaurant
 - Merchant Activity
 - McCoy Vignettes
 - Mary Chase Walker vignette
 - Seeley Stable vignette
 - Military Drills
 - Music (City Guard Band, Washington Square Band)
 - Print Shop
 - Quilting
 - Fiber Arts
 - Political Rallies
 - Suffrage vignette
 - Mail order bride vignette
 - Dancing (Los Bailadores)
- Period attire
 - Period Attire Policy: final drafted. Resource binder being developed. Began review process 3/9/10. Will do a culling of period attire bank to remove unnecessary/inappropriate items. Working with sewing group to produce ‘essentials’ for sale.
 - Grants: Looking to solicit grants for an expansion of the period attire bank.
 - Contest: Possible contest for creation of specific costumes.
- Events: currently ‘A Day with the Ladies of Old Town’, Stagecoach Days enhanced living history, 4th of July, Fiestas Patrias, Halloween/Dia de los Muertos, Battle of San Pasqual, Holiday in the Park/Candlelight Tours. Events may be reviewed in light of volunteer, staff, and fiscal support.
- San Diego State University Intern Program: This program will provide the park with about 1,500 hours of volunteer support for interpretive programs. We are looking to expand this program. Spring 2010 will have six history interns, one design/art history.
- Research: Staff with historian skills, enabling OTSDSHP to put on programs well founded on historic accuracy and interpretive principles. Various references, including character studies.

- Descendents: Re-inspire current and new generations, meetings, take oral histories.
- Support of BOOT Store – product recommendations, coordination of paid staffing and/or volunteers.
- Volunteer Program:
 - Training restructured
 - Volunteer Meetings
 - Shift of coordination
 - Working on improvements to recruitment
 - Guilds: In order to deepen training for volunteers, “guilds” for specific trades and crafts, e.g., fiber arts, carpentry, smithing, etc. set up and expanded. Roughly based on historic guild system and former mentoring program.
 - Crafters
- Digital Communication: OTSDSHP has increased its ability to inform the public with our participation in:
 - Webpage: www.parks.ca.gov/oldtownsandiego. Our new webpage has seen an increase not only of information about events, but also background information on our history. This shall be expanded.
 - Twitter: www.twitter.com/oldtownsandiego
 - Facebook – link on park website.
- Historic Gardens – also part of living history, volunteers, interpretive messages.
 - Areas: McCoy, Machado-Stewart, Machado-Silvas, Estudillo.
 - Partnerships – Heritage Roses, California Native Plant Society, San Diego River Park, SLOW Food San Diego.
- Animal Program - Donkeys, enhanced corral and procedures; partnership with Escaramusas Golondrinas, and other equestrian groups.
- Interpretive Performances: Popular and a potential revenue stream.
 - Saints & Sinners – Fri./Sat. 6pm
 - Ghost Tours: third season, performances were sold out last year, and expanding performances this year.
 - Candlelight Tours / Holiday in the Park - December
- More fee based programs in future.
- Possible future Interpretive Performances:
 - Ten Nights in a Barroom: A recreation of a wildly popular melodrama once performed in San Diego.
 - Old Town Alive – One Big Happy Family: A story of several points of view of Old Town based on the Colonial Williamsburg model.
- Improved communication with the public
 - Newsletters, electronic communications, etc.
 - Press Releases, expanded public relations.
- Assisting concessions on expanding opportunities.
- Staff salaries to be partially funded by fee based events, grants, new partnerships, fundraising, etc.
- Renewing the exhibits at La Casa de Estudillo for the Waterman centennial. Partial funding may be available through the bond funded Interpretive Exhibits Program (IEP). First phase in progress, \$175K in funding.
- Redesign of interpretive flyers for museums (Guidebook done)
- Exhibit Security improvements
- Enhancement of exhibits at the Commercial Restaurant / La Casa de Machado y Silvas
- Various exhibit repairs and enhancements – including audio / video.
- Interpretive Storage coordination/move.
- Reopening of the La Casa de Bandini / Cosmopolitan Hotel and Restaurant.
- Reopening of the Seeley Stable Yard. Develop educational/interpretive programs for windmill.
- Transfer of CalTrans property – parking and redesign of area.